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We Must Become Masters of Technique!

By J. Stalin.

Speech at the Conference of Responsible Industrial Leaders of the Soviet Union

Moscow, 5th February 1931.

At today's session of the Conference of Industrial Leaders of the Soviet Union, the chairman Comrade Ordshonokidse called upon Comrade Stalin to speak. The whole gathering stood up to welcome the leader of the Communist Party, the best pupil of Lenin, the leader of the world proletariat, as he mounted the platform. Comrade Stalin was unable to commence his speech for some minutes owing to the storms of applause and ovations with which he was greeted.

Comrade Stalin said:

The work of your conference is coming to an end. You are about to adopt resolutions. I do not doubt that they will be adopted unanimously. In these resolutions — I know something of their contents — you will approve the industrial and control figures for the year 1931 and pledge yourselves to fulfil them.

The word of the Bolsheviki is a serious word. The Bolsheviki are in the habit of fulfilling the pledges they give. What, however, does it mean to fulfil the pledges of the control figures for the year 1931? It means to secure the general growth of industrial production by 45 per cent. That, however, is a very big task. Nay more. Such a pledge

means not only that you promise to fulfil our Five-Year Plan in four years — that is already a settled affair and does not need any further resolutions — it means that you promise to fulfil it in three years in the most important and decisive branches of industry

It is good that the Conference promises to fulfil the plan for 1931, to fulfil the Five-Year Plan in three years. But we have been taught by "bitter experience"; we know that promises are not always kept. At the beginning of 1930 promises were likewise given to fulfil the annual plan. At that time the output of our industry was to be increased by 31 to 32 per cent. That promise, however, was not kept. The growth of industrial production for the year 1930 amounted in reality to 25 per cent. We must put the question, will not the same thing be repeated this year? The leaders of our industry now give the promise to increase industrial production for the year 1931 by 45 per cent. But what guarantee is there that this promise will be kept?

What is necessary in order to fulfil the control figures, in order to achieve a 45 per cent. increase of production, in order to fulfil the Five-Year Plan not in four but in the most important and decisive branches of production in three years?

For this two main conditions are necessary. Firstly, that real, or, as we say, objective possibilities exist for this. Secondly, that there exist the desire and ability so to run factories that these possibilities become actual facts.

Did we in the past years possess the objective possibilities in order completely to fulfil the plan? Yes. Indisputable facts bear witness to this. These facts are that in March and April of last year industry increased its output by 31 per cent. in comparison with the previous year. The question therefore arises, why did we not fulfil the plan for the whole year? What has prevented this? What was lacking? There was lacking the ability to make use of the existing possibilities. There was lacking the ability to run the workshops, factories and mines properly.

There existed the first condition: the objective possibilities for the fulfilment of the Plan. But we did not have in a sufficient measure the second condition: the ability to manage production. And precisely because there was lacking the ability to manage the factories, the Plan was not fulfilled. Instead of an increase of 31 to 32 per cent., there was an increase of only 25 per cent. Of course, an increase of 25 per cent. is a big achievement. There is not a single capitalist country which in the year 1930 showed or even now shows an increase of production. In all the capitalist countries without exception there is taking place a big falling off of production. Under these conditions an increase of 25 per cent. is a tremendous advance. But we could have done even better. We possessed all the necessary "objective" prerequisites for this.

What guarantees exist now, that we shall not this year have a repetition of what happened last year, that the Plan will be completely fulfilled, that the existing possibilities will be utilised by us in the manner necessary, that the promise will not to some extent remain on paper?

In the history of States, in the history of countries, in the history of armies cases have occurred where there existed all the possibilities for success, for victory, but these possibilities were not used, as the leaders did not notice these possibilities, did not know how to take advantage of them, so that the armies suffered a defeat.

Do we possess all the necessary possibilities for the fulfilment of the control figures for the year 1931? Yes, we possess such possibilities.

What constitutes these possibilities and what is necessary in order to utilise these possibilities?

In the first place sufficient natural wealth is necessary: iron-ore, coal, mineral oil, corn, cotton. Do we possess these? Yes, in greater quantities than in any other country. Let us take, for instance, the Ural district, which represents such a combination of natural resources as is not to be found in any other country. Ore, coal, copper, oil, grain — the Ural district possesses all of these. We have everything (it is true we are lacking rubber, but in one or two years we shall have rubber at our disposal). So far as natural resources are concerned we lack nothing. We have even more than necessary.

What, however, is still necessary?

There is needed the existence of a power which has the desire and the force to utilise these vast natural resources for the benefit of the people. Do we possess such a power? Yes! It is true, our work for the utilisation of the natural resources does not always proceed without a certain amount of friction between our own collaborators. For example, in the past year the Soviet Power had to conduct a certain struggle over the question of forming a second metallurgical and coal basis, without which we cannot develop further. We have already overcome this obstacle and we shall possess this basis in a short time. What is still required?

It is requisite that this power enjoys the support of the masses of the workers and peasants, numbering millions. Does our power enjoy this support? Yes. You will not find in the whole world any other power that enjoys such support of the workers and peasants as the Soviet Power enjoys. There is no need for me to refer to the fact of the growth of socialist competition, to the fact of the growth of the shock-brigade movement, to the campaign for the counter-plan of the masses in production and finance. All

these facts, which clearly prove the support of the Soviet Power by the million masses, are known to everybody.

What is necessary in order to fulfil and to exceed the control figures for 1931?

There is necessary the existence of a regime which is free from the incurable maladies of capitalism and which has serious advantages over capitalism. Crisis, unemployment, mismanagement, impoverishment of the broad masses — these are the incurable maladies of capitalism. Our regime does not suffer from these maladies because power is in our hands, in the hands of the working class, because we are carrying on planned economy, accumulating resources according to plan and distributing them correctly among the various branches of national economy. We are free from the incurable maladies of capitalism. That is where we differ from capitalism; herein lies our decisive advantage over capitalism. Let us consider how the capitalists seek to emerge from the crisis. They are resorting to a drastic reduction of wages; they are forcing down the prices of raw material and food to the utmost. But they will not hear of any serious reduction in the prices of industrial products. That means that they wish to escape from the crisis at the cost of the main body of consumers of goods, at the cost of the workers, at the cost of the peasants, at the cost of the toilers of those countries that produce raw materials and food. The capitalists themselves are sawing away the branch on which they are sitting, and instead of finding a way out of the crisis the crisis is becoming deeper, there is resulting an accumulation of new preconditions for new and even more serious crises. Our advantage lies in the fact that we are free from crises of overproduction, that we have not and shall not have millions of unemployed; that we have no anarchy of production because we are carrying on planned economy. But that is not everything. We are the country of the most concentrated industry. That means that we are building up our industry on the foundations of the best technique, and as a result are able to secure an unexampled productivity of labour, an unprecedented tempo of accumulation. Our weaknesses in the past consisted in the fact that this industry was based on the scattered peasant agriculture. But that is already a thing of the past. Today things are already different. Tomorrow, perhaps in a year, we shall become the country of the largest agricultural undertakings in the world. The Soviet estates and the collective farms, which represent the forms of big undertakings, are already this year supplying one half of our total market grain. That means, however, that our regime, the Soviet regime, offers us possibilities of rapid progress such as no bourgeois country can dream of.

What is still necessary in order to advance with seven-league boots?

There is necessary the existence of a Party that is sufficiently consolidated and united in order to concentrate the efforts of all the best people of the working class on one point, and which has sufficient experience in order not to give away in the face of difficulties and to be able systematically to carry out in practice the correct revolutionary Bolshevik policy. Have we such a Party? Yes. Is its policy correct? Yes, it is correct, for it is yielding serious successes. This is recognised today not only by the friends but also by the enemies of the working class. Let us consider all the well-known "honourable" gentlemen — Fish in America, Churchill in England, Poincaré in France — how they are howling and foaming with rage against our Party! What is the reason of this howling, of this outbreak of fury? It is because the policy of our Party is correct, because it is bringing success after success.

Here, comrades, we have all the possibilities enabling us to fulfil the control figures for 1931, to fulfil the Five-Year Plan in four and, in the most important spheres, even in three years.

Thus, we have the first prerequisite for the fulfilment of the plan — the "objective" possibilities.

Do we possess the second prerequisite, the ability to take advantage of these possibilities? In other words, do we possess the correct management in the factories, workshops and mines? Is everything here in order?

Unfortunately everything here is not in order, and as Bolsheviks we must say it quite plainly and openly.

What does management of production mean? With us the question of management of the factories is not always regarded from a Bolshevik standpoint. With us it is often thought that management means simply signing papers. That is regrettable, but it is fact. Sometimes we are reminded involuntarily of the Pompadour of Schtchedrin. You remember how Madame Pompadour proceeded to teach the young Pompadour: "Do not worry your head over science, do not study, other people can engage in this, it is not your affair. Your business is to manage to sign papers." It must be admitted to our shame that among us, among the Bolsheviks, there are not a few such people who manage by signing papers. But to study things, to acquire technical knowledge and to have a thorough mastery of the matter, is out of the question.

How could it happen that we Bolsheviks, who have gone through three revolutions, who emerged victoriously from the heavy civil war, who have solved tremendous tasks of building up industry and diverted the peasantry on to the path of Socialism—how could it happen that we failed in the matter of managing production?

The reason is that it is easier to sign papers than to manage production, and numerous economists have adopted the line of least resistance. We too are to blame. The centre is to blame. Ten years ago the slogan was issued: As the Communists do not yet sufficiently understand the technics of production, as they must first learn to run industry, the technicians and engineers, the specialists shall run industry; you Communists must not interfere in technical affairs, but study without interfering in technics, study indefatigably the science of running industry, in order then, together with the specialists, to become real leaders of production who really understand their business. That was the slogan. What was the actual result? The second part of this formula was thrown overboard, for learning is difficult. The first part of the formula, however, was simplified, and non-interference was interpreted as meaning abandonment of the study of the technics of production. There resulted an absurdity—an injurious and dangerous absurdity, and the more quickly we get rid of it the better.

Life itself repeatedly informed us that things were not in order in this sphere. The Shakhty trial was the first signal. The Shakhty trial showed that the Party organizations and the trade unions were lacking in revolutionary vigilance. It showed that in regard to technics our economists are terribly backward; that engineers and technicians who work without supervision are more prone to go over to sabotage, the more so as the enemy abroad uninterruptedly pester them with "suggestions". The second signal was the trial of the "Industrial Party". Of course, the class struggle is the underlying cause of sabotage. Of course, the class enemy offers the most furious resistance to the socialist offensive. But this alone does not suffice to explain such a prolific growth of sabotage activity.

How could it come about that sabotage assumed such wide dimensions? Who is to blame for this? We are to blame. If we had viewed differently the task of running industry, if we had gone over much earlier to the study of technique, to mastering technique, if we had interfered more frequently with an expert knowledge in the management of industry, the saboteurs would not have succeeded in causing so much damage.

We ourselves must become specialists, the masters of the business; we must turn our faces to technique, to technical knowledge; life is driving us in this direction. But neither the first signal not even the second signal has up to now secured the necessary turn. It is time, high time, to turn our faces to technique. It is time to discard the old slogan, the obsolete slogan of non-interference in technique. We must ourselves become specialists, absolute masters of the business.

We are frequently asked why we have not the management of industry in our own hands personally. This will only be possible when we master technique. So long as we have not among us, among the Bolsheviks, sufficient people who are thoroughly familiar with questions of technique, economics and finance, we shall not have the management of industry in our own hands. You may adopt as many resolutions as you like, pledge yourselves in ever such beautiful words, but if you do not master the technics, the economy, the finance of the factory, the workshop and mine nothing will come of it.

It is therefore necessary that we ourselves learn the technique, that we ourselves master the business. Therein only lies the guarantee that our plans will be completely fulfilled and that the running of industry will be actually in our hands.

This task is of course not easy, nevertheless it must be accomplished. Science, technical experience, knowledge, all this can be acquired, if not today, then tomorrow. The chief thing here is to possess the passionate Bolshevik desire to acquire technical knowledge, to acquire a knowledge of the science of production. Provided there exists a passionate desire, everything can be achieved and everything mastered.

It is often asked whether the tempo cannot be slowed down, the movement damped down a bit. No comrades, that is impossible. The pace must not be retarded. On the contrary, it must be increased according to our strength and possibilities. This is demanded by our obligations to the workers and peasants of the Soviet Union. This is demanded by our obligations to the working class of the whole world.

To slow down the pace means to remain behind. Those who remain behind, however, are beaten. We do not however, wish to be beaten. No, we do not. The history of the old Russia consisted in the fact that it was continually beaten owing to its backwardness. It was beaten by the Mongolian Khans; it was beaten by the Turkish Beys; it was beaten by the Swedish feudal lords; it was beaten by the Polish-Lithuanian pans; it was beaten by the English and French capitalists; it was beaten by the Japanese barons. It was beaten owing to its backwardness, on account of its military backwardness, its cultural backwardness, its political backwardness, its industrial backwardness, its agricultural backwardness. It was beaten because one could do so with impunity and obtain advantage from it. You remember the words of the pre-revolutionary poet: "You are crippled, you are at the same time running over with wealth; you are powerful, you are at the same time impotent, oh mother Russia!"

These gentlemen have learned by heart these words of the old poet. They therefore proceeded to attack Russia and declared: "You are running over with wealth", therefore you can be plundered. They attacked Russia and declared: "You are crippled and impotent", therefore we can rob and plunder you with impunity. That is the law of capitalism — to beat the weak and backward. The wolf law of capitalism. You are backward, you are weak, therefore you are in the wrong, therefore you can be beaten and subjugated. You are powerful, therefore you are in the right, therefore one must beware of you.

Therefore we must no longer remain backward.

In the past we had not and could not have any fatherland. Now, however, as with us the workers are in power, we have a fatherland and shall defend its independence. Do you want our Socialist fatherland to be beaten and to lose its independence? If you do not want this you must liquidate this backwardness in the shortest possible time and develop a real Bolshevik tempo in the promotion of its economy. There is no other way. Therefore Lenin said during the October days: "Either death or catching up with and passing the advanced capitalist countries."

We are 50 to a 100 years behind the advanced countries. We must cover this distance within 10 years. We must either do that or be trodden under foot.

It is this that dictates to us our obligation towards the workers and peasants of the Soviet Union.

But we have other, more serious and important obligations, namely, obligations towards the world proletariat. These last are in agreement with our obligations to the workers and peasants of the Soviet Union, but we place them higher. The working class of the Soviet Union is a part of the working class of the world. We are winning thanks not only to the efforts of the working class of the Soviet Union, but also thanks to the support of the international working class. Without this support we should have been swallowed up long ago. It is said that our country is the shock-brigade of the proletarians of all countries. That is well said. But for the sake of what is the international proletariat supporting us? Whereby do we merit this support? We merit it because we were the first to plunge into the fight against capitalism, because we were the first to set up the workers' power and that we have been

the first to commence to build up socialism. We merit this support because we are accomplishing something which if successful will transform the whole world and emancipate the whole of the working class. What, however, is necessary for success? Liquidation of our backwardness, development of a higher Bolshevik tempo in the building up of Socialism. We must move forward at such a pace that the working class of the whole world which is watching us can say, here is our advance-guard, here is our shock brigade here is our workers' power, here is our fatherland, — the cause of Soviet Russia is our cause; well, we shall support it against the capitalists and fan the flames of the world revolution. Must we justify the hopes of the international working class. Yes, we must, if we do not wish to be defeated in the end.

These are our obligations.

You see that they dictated to us the Bolshevik tempo of our development.

I am not saying that in the last few years nothing has been accomplished in regard to the running of industry. Something has been achieved, and in fact very much. We have doubled the production of industry compared with pre-war time. We have created the greatest agricultural production in the world. We should have been able to do even more, however, if we had striven in this time to learn really to master production, to acquire knowledge of its technique and its financial and economic side.

In ten years at the most we must cover the distance separating us from the advanced countries of capitalism. We possess all the "objective" possibilities for this. We lack only the ability correctly to utilise these possibilities. That, however depends upon us, only upon us! It is time that we learnt to utilise these possibilities. It is time to put an end to the reprehensible attitude of non-interference in production. It is time that we adopted another, a new attitude appropriate to the present period: to interfere in everything. Are you a director of a factory? then interfere in everything. Let nothing escape you. Learn and again learn. The Bolsheviks must acquire a knowledge of technique. It is time that the Bolsheviks became specialists. In the reconstruction period technique decides everything. And a manager who does not learn technique and does not desire to learn it, is a joke but no manager. It is said that it is hard to acquire a knowledge of technique. That is not true. There are no strongholds which the Bolsheviks cannot capture. We have solved far more difficult tasks. We have captured power. We have diverted the middle peasants on to the path of Socialism. We have already accomplished what is most important from the standpoint of socialist construction. There is still a trifle left for us to do: to learn the technique, to acquire a knowledge of science. And when we have done that we shall adopt a tempo such as we do not even venture to dream of today. We shall, however, do this if we really have the will."

At the conclusion of his speech the Conference stood up and gave Comrade Stalin an enthusiastic and prolonged ovation. There were cries of "Long live Comrade Stalin, the leader of the Party!"

Measures for Developing Soviet Inland Water Transport.

Moscow, 9th February 1931.

An appeal has just been published by the Council of People's Commissars and by the Central Committee of the Communist Party, signed by comrades Molotov and Stalin concerned with the development of soviet inland water transport. The appeal enumerates a series of measures to be put into immediate operation in order to further the inland water transport system: reorganisation of the shipbuilding industry working for inland water transport, improvement of the repair system, the granting of 50 million roubles for overhauling old and building new shipyards, a series of improvements for inland water goods transport, improvement of the business administration, wage increases for sailors, firemen, pilots, mechanics, deck officers and captains ranging from 10 to 50%, the granting of 16 million roubles from the reserve funds in order to improve the living conditions of the inland water transport workers, the formation of special co-operatives in order to improve supplies for these workers, etc.

POLITICS

The German Social Fascist Pact with Brüning.

By Th. Neubauer (Berlin).

"The great speech of the Reichs-Chancellor Brüning has called forth unmistakable satisfaction on the Stock Exchange." (Berliner Börsenzeitung, 8th February 1931.)

Six months after the dictatorial regime of article 48, Chancellor Brüning, on the 5th of February, suddenly came forward as a "passionate champion" of Parliamentary democracy, swore by all the gods of the capitalist world "to make as little use as possible of the dictatorship article", attached the greatest value to settling the budget for 1931 by Parliamentary means, and concluded his speech by expressing satisfaction that now at last there existed a Parliamentary majority in order to keep up the appearance of bourgeois democracy and at the same time with the new standing orders to further gag Parliamentary discussion.

The Parliamentary majority that the Chancellor now possesses extends from the former German nationalist Count Westarp and Treviranus to the social democrats Hermann Müller and Rudolf Breitscheid. The "Vorwärts" characterises this majority as follows: "Its composition is so motley that its effect is almost comical. Four of the parties comprising this majority, namely, the German People's Party, the Economic Party, the Agricultural People's Party and the People's Conservative Party, from April 1930 to January 1931 at least once a month renewed their solemn decision that they could never again enter a government together with the social democracy; and only a few weeks ago the new leader of the People's Party went personally to the Reichs-Chancellor in order to inform him that in the event of the Brüning Cabinet having even the tacit support of the social democracy, his party would withdraw its support from the Cabinet.

What "divine power" has now managed to convert the dictatorial Chancellor into an apostle of democracy and the above-mentioned parties into coalition brothers of the social democracy? How has it come about that Brüning and his parties, who only a few weeks ago carried on very serious negotiations with Hitler regarding the participation of the national socialists in the government, are now anxious to edge away from the Nazis? The explanation is to be found in the negotiations with Briand at Geneva and in particular in the hopes of big French credits. The Chancellor confirmed this in his speech of 5th of February, and the bourgeois press now speak quite openly about it. It was upon this basis that Brüning brought together his majority from Müller to Westarp, so that the Communist vote of no-confidence in the government was defeated by 293 votes to 221.

In return for its support Brüning has given the social democracy absolutely nothing. Brüning did not have for the social democracy a single word which could be interpreted even as a sham concession; not a single sentence with which it could "justify" its vote for the dictatorship government to the social democratic electors. Will, however, the social democratic workers have already forgotten the words which the social democracy used only recently against the Brüning government?

"Against the Brüning government which is allied with big capital and wishes to destroy the rights of the working class." was the cry with which the Executive Committee of the S.P.G. appealed to the masses at the time of the election. At that time all the leaflets of the social democracy declared that the Brüning Cabinet is "the most reactionary government since the revolution". According to the social democratic "Sächsische Volksblatt", the October programme of the Brüning Cabinet was "an attack upon the people", and the "Leipziger Volkszeitung" spoke of "reactionary madness". "Away with Treviranus, the political adventurer!" and "Away with Schiele and his starvation policy!" cried the S.P.G. Stegerwald, the Reichsminister for Labour, is regarded by the socialdemocratic workers as the man who stands for the most ruthless wage cuts, for the brutal cutting down of unemployment benefit, for

unheard-of deterioration of health insurance and of the provision for the war victims.

It is with this Cabinet of potential enemies of labour that the social democrats have now concluded a firm pact by assuring it of their support in face of all the attacks of Parliamentary opposition, by guaranteeing it the acceptance of the Reichs budget, by promising it their active assistance in the wage-cutting campaign. By voting for the Brüning Cabinet the social democracy has taken over not only the responsibility for all the monstrous attacks of this government against the working masses in the past, but it also takes over responsibility for the new attacks which the Brüning government is now preparing against the working people.

For the wage cuts are still going on, and every penny of the wage reductions dictated by the Brüning government and Stegerwald's official arbitrators must be booked to the account of the social democratic leaders. The cutting down of social services is now going on in all municipalities with unprecedented brutality as a result of the policy which is supported by the social democracy of Germany. Brüning has promised the East Elb agrarians 100 million marks in subventions—the social democracy takes over responsibility for this present to the junkers. The agrarian and industrial capitalists are loudly demanding fresh protective tariffs—the social democracy renders their introduction possible and thereby takes over the responsibility for the increased plundering of the working people. The Reichs-budget for 1931 demands over 700 millions for armaments and at the same time cuts down social expenditure by 500 millions—the social democracy has pledged itself to accept this budget. The "Vorwärts" of 8th February wrote:

"The social democracy is prepared to overthrow the Brüning government the moment it can have a better government. It is prepared to reject the Reichs-budget in this form if it is shown the possibility of putting a better one in its place. This possibility does not exist, so that a government which includes Treviranus is still good enough to prevent a government including Hugenberg; and a budget decided by the Reichstag is better than one decreed by the Reichs-President."

The dictatorial government of Brüning as the notorious "lesser evil". Will this stupid oft-repeated demagogy still serve to catch the social democratic workers? They also are beginning to see that with the help of this policy Germany is being more and more fascised and the misery of the workers is becoming more and more unbearable. The social democratic workers are realising that this policy of their leaders means nothing else but clearing the path for the further development of fascism.

"Hitler or Brüning, which is better?" ask the social democratic demagogues. To this question the working masses must reply clearly and plainly: "Neither Brüning nor Hitler, but a people's revolution against the dictatorship of capital and fascism!"

Stormy Reichstag Session.

Berlin, 9th February 1931.

To-day's session of the Reichstag was very lively in view of the obstruction practised by the opposition against the proposal to tighten up Standing Orders against the parliamentary opposition. The communist deputy Stoecker immediately moved an alteration of the agenda. Further, it was declared that the house was without a quorum. As the members of the oppositional parties left the hall, the house was found to be without the necessary quorum and the session was adjourned for an hour. At the beginning of the new session a long debate on the Standing Orders took place and lasted until five o'clock. Lively collisions occurred in view of the dictatorial attitude of the Speaker, the social democrat **Loebe**, towards the members of the Communist fraction. A number of communist deputies were excluded from the proceedings of the House for from 3 to 8 sessions. The communist deputy **Walter**, a metal worker from the A.E.G. (General Electric Co.), went up to the Speaker's chair and presented **Loebe** with a regulation rubber truncheon and a police shako. For this symbolic action he was expelled from the session.

The Centre (Catholic) Party deputy **Dr. Bell** took the floor on behalf of the government parties and the social democrats, who support the proposal to limit the rights of the opposition. Dr. Bell's remarks were almost completely lost in a storm of interruptions. He was followed by deputy **Frank** on behalf of the Fascist Party. Frank followed the example of his leader **Goebbels** and contented himself with empty phrases, which culminated in the threat that if the government thought they could hold down the fascist opposition with such methods, the fascists would reject all responsibility for such methods leading to civil war.

Deputy **Torgler** spoke in the name of the communist fraction.

After Torgler's speech both the communist and the nationalist opposition left the Reichstag amidst violently expressed protests. The proposals of Dr. Bell for the alteration of the Standing Orders were then adopted with 303 votes against none, the social democrats voting solidly to gag the opposition.

The next item on the agenda was a proposal to prohibit members of the Reichstag and the various Diets from signing as responsible editors of newspapers etc. Amidst great protests from the communist benches the proposal was adopted in the first and second reading. The proposal to grant all the demands of the Public Prosecutor for the withdrawal of the immunity of many deputies without any detailed examination was adopted with 292 against 9 votes and one abstention. Again the opposition left the session. The session was closed at 2.30 a. m.

Berlin, 10th February 1931.

At the commencement of to-day's session of the Reichstag the national socialist member **Herr Stöhr** made a declaration that the national socialist Reichstag Fraction will not take part in the work of the Reichstag in future. In this declaration it is stated that in spite of the election result of the 14th September last, the national socialist opposition, represented by the national socialist party, has been excluded from the government in order, by a violation of the Constitution, to set up the dictatorship of a Minority government which has to rely upon the social democracy for support. After the Reichstag majority at yesterday's session, by a fresh breach of the Constitution, altered the Standing Orders, all future decisions of this Parliament are unconstitutional and invalid. This Reichstag is the Reichstag of the Young-Plan, but the people want an end to be put to the insane payment of tributes. The national socialists intend to leave this tribute-Reichstag and not enter it again until the dictatorial measures against the Opposition passed yesterday are cancelled. Whilst **Stöhr** handed to the President of the Reichstag a written statement, in which he resigned his position of Vice-President, the national socialists left the Hall. Thereupon the deputy **von Freytag-Loringhoven** read out a similar declaration on behalf of the German nationalist fraction.

Speaking on behalf of the Communist Party Comrade **Stöcker** made the following declaration:

In spite of the brutal violation of the rights of members at the last session of the Reichstag the Communists will not leave this place, where they have to carry on the fight for the interests of the working class. The Communists stigmatise the cowardly comedy of the national socialists and German nationalists, who rejected the Communist motion demanding the immediate cessation of payment of Young tributes and who represent the interests of a part of the trust capitalists and not the interests of the working class. There is not the least doubt that the national socialists and the German nationalists will in a short time come to an agreement with the parties of the Brüning block in order to employ with the greatest brutality against the Communists the Standing Orders decided yesterday. The Communists, following the example of the **Bolsheviks**, will make use of the Parliamentary platform in order to rally the working masses for the fight. Under the leadership of the Communist Party the working people of Germany will sweep away this rotten Parliamentarism together with the capitalist system of exploitation.

The Brüning government appears to regard the aggravation of the inner Parliamentary situation as very serious, particularly in view of the negotiations for foreign credits. There is no doubt that by this action of the **Hitler-Hugenberg** groups the pressure on the Brüning Cabinet to include the national socialists in the government is increased.

The Horrors of Fascist Rule in Poland.

By L. K. (Warsaw).

The oppositional press in Poland has for months been conducting a big campaign against the ill-treatment to which a number of oppositional deputies and former ministers who had become inconvenient to Pilsudski were exposed in the Brest fortress. It raised a great outcry that in Brest "the law and the honour and dignity of the State of the Polish nation have been violated." Protests poured in from professors, high educational and social institutions, and even collective protests from officers. This demagogic campaign, which represented a new deception-manoeuve of the oppositional parties of Poland, whose aim was to represent the prisoners of Brest as martyrs and to make the social fascist defenders of capital and of fascism appear as "fighters" against the fascist system so hated by the masses, was joined in by the international democratic press.

The Brest "prisoners" were soon set in liberty.

The same oppositional parties and the same press have not however said a word, or hardly a word, in protest against the inhuman torture of proletarian prisoners in the dungeons of the Polish bourgeoisie, above all in the Luck prison, and against the fascist punitive expeditions in the Western Ukraine. As a result of the protest movement of the toiling masses of Poland and of the other countries, this conspiracy of silence has now been broken. On 3rd February a Polish social democratic senator read out in the form of an interpellation in the Polish senate a list of tortures which have been carried out in the Luck police-prison against proletarian prisoners. The deputy had to confirm that which the revolutionary workers' press has been saying for many weeks past, i. e., that women communist prisoners have been violated repeatedly in the most brutal manner by the police officers in Luck; that "in order to extract confessions urine and petroleum mixed with water had been poured through the nose of communists and that the sex organs of the men and also of the women prisoners had been "treated" with electric current in order to extort confessions."

In reply to this interpellation the Polish Minister for the Interior, **Skladkowski**, declared that he had sent a Committee of investigation to Luck and that this Committee had made observations which had induced him as a loyal Minister of the Interior instantly to dismiss the whole of the police officials in Luck prison from the public service. That, he said, was already an accomplished fact.

The Senate took note of the declaration of the Minister of the Interior. Not a single voice was raised in the Senate to declare that the torture of the political prisoners in the Luck prison is not an isolated case but a **system**, which is employed in all prisons of fascist Poland against revolutionary workers. How proletarian prisoners have been treated, and are being treated, not only in Luck but in all other Polish prisons, is to be seen from an Open Letter from a number of prominent Polish intellectuals. The Letter reads as follows:

We wish to convey the following facts to the knowledge of the public.

Some hundred people, including peasants of the Wolyn province, were arrested on the 13th November 1930 on suspicion of Labour agitation, in Lemberg and the neighbourhood, and secretly transferred to Luck, where they were actually tortured for some weeks as a means of extorting the evidence required for a big political trial. After a month the prisoners were taken to four different jails. We understand that the victims are, amongst others: in **Plock**: Eugene Kuszko, Neustein, Ekstein, Ojasz Schachter and Goljan; in **Lomza**: Nicolas Pawluk, Lopatynski, Julian Kuszko, Jacob Schlesinger, Blima Finkelstein, Rose Spekulant and in **Siedlce**: Rose Weisberg, Ola Platon, Sophie Reising, Mieczyslaw Wiklinski, Nicolas Szczerba, Lotocki, Lebewohl, Wilhelm Stolarczyk, Michalenko, Wesolowski, etc. in **Luck**, where they remained: Jan Kozar, Bilawka (in the hospital), Nina Matuliwna, a woman from Drohobycz and may be Bojko Stop (in hospital) if still alive—also a certain number of people whose names and present abode have not been ascertained.

The following are extracts from letters received from the prisoners:

"The arrested people have been tortured with consummate craft. Men were flogged with rubber clubs on their genital organ until it swelled like a pumpkin or else a hound was set at the gland and bit it. These individuals will remain mutilated for life. The women were assaulted. Further three 8 pints jugs of water at a time were poured down their noses. They were flogged on the footsoles—they got 50 to 100 strokes. The beating continued until they owned up anything that was demanded of them. The woman Nina Matuliwna cut her veins open at the horrible sight of the victims of these scourgings. She is at present in the Luck hospital. The blows inflicted on Jan Kozar have injured his lungs and kidneys and he expectorates blood. Bilawek's footsoles were scourged so mercilessly that they are no more than two protruding bleeding lumps: his teeth were knocked out; his kidneys injured—he now urinates blood. Rose Spekulant was assaulted by the chief constable Tkaczuk, Marjan and "Wladzio" Postowicz. On the night of the 25th—26th November 1930, she was stripped of all her clothes, her hands were bound to her legs, a stick fixed in behind her arms. She was blindfolded with a towel, set upon a table and assaulted by the three of them. The Razings were terrorised into confessing the statements which the police demanded. When the cross examination afforded no such result, the man was laid out flat on his back, stripped of his shoes and beaten with a rubber club on the soles, the feet and the thighs or else water was poured into his nose. When this likewise remained of no avail he was scourged on his testicles or his sexual organ was pulled and twisted. Ojasz Schachter was flogged to such an extent on the soles and the genital glands that he was deprived of movement for some days. Kobrianiec was tortured so cruelly already in Lemberg that on his arrival in Luck his face was terribly swollen and blood dripped out of his eyes. Constable Serge Zarembo was generally present when tortures were inflicted and he participated in these doings. His principal assistants were 1. Chief Constable Marjan Tkaczuk, 2. Constable "Wladzio" Postowicz, 3. Kostecki, 4. Pisarski, specialised in the Jewish affairs, 5. "Antos" (Tony), 6. Constable Mulawa.

"After the cross-examination by the police when a few days had elapsed and the prisoner was somewhat coming to, investigations were undertaken at the Police Magistrate's, who held court in the head offices of the examination department, next to the hall of tortures. The official report of the accused was written in the presence of either Zarembo, Tkaczuk or Kostecki. When a prisoner altered the statement deposited with Zarembo, the cross-examination was interrupted and he was terrorised by Zarembo or Tkaczuk until he acknowledged the report in question to the Police Magistrate. With some of the prisoners these proceedings were repeated several times."

Serge Zarembo is no novice. He is known to have conducted similar proceedings in the period prior to the famous political trial of Wlodzimierz Wolynski (1926). These methods of torture are described in a letter addressed by the provocateur Trauner to the Minister of Justice of that time, mentioning the said names of Zarembo and Tkaczuk. At present, on the eve of another political trial, Zarembo appears on the scene again.

Luck is not an exceptional case in Poland. The following is an extract from the petition forwarded by Lejzor Lewin, a workman of 17 years, at present incarcerated in Lomza, to the Prosecutor of the district court, concerning the inquisition inflicted on him in the premises of the police authorities at Ostrow Mazowiecki on the 9th and 11th November 1930.

"The inquisition employed upon me consisted in pouring a mixture of water and petrol in to me six times through my nose, at the same time filling up my mouth with a rag soaked with petrol, and in pricking both my thighs with pins, as they did on the 11th November for three hours and a half. When water was poured in me during the cross-questioning I was continually flogged with rubber clubs; they tore at my hair and when I rose after having absorbed the third portion of water they struck my

head against the wall. During the fourth and the fifth portion of water they tore at my sexual glands. This inquisition was effected by the Chief Constable of the Zareby Koscielce police force Gorski and the police agent whom Gorski called by the name of "Bogdanowicz". Bogdanowicz poured the water in me. Sitting on my chest he flogged me with a rubber club and tore at my genital organ. The investigation service agent Abramowski hit me and demanded that I should become a police spy for a salary of 250 zlotys monthly. My actual report is with the Police Magistrate's where it was deposited on the 22nd. November 1930, although he stated that such as me ought to have their eyes torn out."

Similar tortures were applied before the Kowel political trial last year (arrests made in February 1929) when a girl, Ruchla Tasman, was violated. The same Zaremba and the Provincial Chief of the Sureté Niedzialkowski, assisted in these tortures. The charges against these parties have been attached to the brief of this case Nr. K 323/29 and the lawyers for the defence, i. e. Dr. Landau, Dr. Gluszkiewicz and Dr. Rozenblatt are aware of these facts. The prosecutors in Luck and especially the assistant prosecutor Korolko are likewise informed of them.

The people arrested in Lemberg during September 1930, viz. Salomon Umszweif, Tadeusz Gaja, Mechel Jeckel, Wlodzimierz Szajan and the girl Edka Stifter were tortured by Wojciechowski, Kowalczyk and Bilewicz. As a result of these tortures Gaja has become insane and is now in the jail mad-house. Edka Stifter who is at present in the prison hospital was tortured in the following manner: her head was wrapped in a blanket, she was lashed to a bench with leather straps and beaten with rubber clubs whilst her bare feet were struck with some metallic spring contrivance until she fainted. During the next cross-examination she got hysterics. Her mouth was gagged and a pipe through which was injected some acid substance applied to her nose. Wojciechowski is coming up to her in the hospital ward and threatening her with further tortures if she breathes a single word to the Police Magistrate, about what she underwent, as he assures her it would harm him in no way and would only cause her loss. She has signed her report without knowledge of its contents. No one is allowed to see the prisoners under examination, not even their families and lawyers.

We distinctly emphasise that these facts, selected from many others that happened at different times and in various places, are but very few instances of the methods applied in Poland for some years towards the movement of liberation of the working people. The Luck affair is a vivid illustration and the sequel to what was called the pacification of Western Galicia.

All the cry that was raised on account of the Brest affair as having undermined the honour of the Polish bourgeoisie is no thrust directed against the White Terror as a system, on the contrary, it only serves to divert the general attention from the White Terror which is now a part of the interior War preparations of the bourgeoisie, especially in the Ukrainian districts.

The Brest occurrences were therefore an expression of the White Terror that has been applied continually since the independence of Poland towards the labouring masses — nay applied and tolerated by the very same Korfanty. Witos and Barlicki when they were in the government and supported all the bourgeois governments. They are only an illustration of intestine conflicts and struggles in the midst of the bourgeois fascist camp for each faction's share in the power and for the common goal of oppression of the working class movement.

This letter is no act of protest. It is an act of accusation in a case where the verdict will be rendered by the proletariat struggling for its liberation.

We appeal to all who sympathise with our ideas and feelings to add their signature to this letter.

(Signed) Wladyslaw Broniewski, I. Deutscher, Jan Hempel, Juliusz Grot, A. Rajchman, Bach. of the Warsaw University and Professor in the Free University of Warsaw, S. Rudnianski, Professor of the Free University of Warsaw, Leon Schiller, Emil Scheurer, St. R. Stande, Andre Stawar, Alexander Wat, St. Wygodzki, Antonina Sokolicz, Czeslaw Hulanicki,

Whether the dismissal of the sadists of Luck announced by the „loyal“ Polish Minister for the Interior is already an „accomplished fact“ is still a matter of doubt. In any event the Minister did not say anything about subjecting these tortures to special punishment. Judging from previous practice it is very probable that their alleged dismissal only means that these police brutes will be transferred to other prisons, which would practically mean their promotion.

The suffering toiling masses of Poland will not be misled either by this „measure“ or by the demagogic protest interpellations of the social democrats who share responsibility for the fascist system and the white terror in Poland. They know that the fascist terror against the Labour movement and its champions can be abolished only together with the whole fascist system, and they will continue their fight against this system with increased energy.

Discontent Among the Peasants in Lappo Finland.

By Petit-Pays.

The economic crisis is having increasing devastating effects in Finland. The value of foreign trade has fallen from 14 258 000 Finnish Marks in the year 1928 to 10 646 000 in the past year. Thus the value of foreign trade is only 10 per cent. above that of pre-war time, while the corresponding figures for 1928 and 1927 were 57 per cent. and 53 per cent. respectively.

The export of matches has declined from 4202 tons in the year 1929 to 2359 tons, i. e., about one half, in the past year. Last year only 1639 motor cars were imported as against 6701 in the year 1928. The misery of the working population is increasing enormously and is even extending to large sections of the small and middle peasants. For a time the small and middle peasants were misled by the furious incitement and the constant demonstrations against the town workers and diverted from their own troubles, but this means is proving less and less effective. The peasants are beginning to realise that the Lappo Terror which they supported has in no wise improved their own economic position. Thus the peasantry, hitherto a willing tool of the fascist leaders, is now beginning to present its bill for the „work“ it has performed.

Over a thousand small and middle peasants came from various districts to Loimaa to a demonstration. Here they discussed economic questions and submitted their demands to the fascist authorities in a very threatening tone. They demand: 1. the fixing of 6 per cent. as the maximum rate of interest where full security is offered, and 7½ per cent. where there is no real security. 2. A Bill against usurers, according to which half the capital in addition to the interests should be confiscated by the State in case of usury. 3. Moratorium for debts and conversion of the short-termed loans into long-termed loans; 4. No peasant farms to be sold up on account of debts for a period of two years.

The resolution declares that „if Parliament does not solve these questions immediately in the next session, the peasants will take the matter into their own hands.“

Five peasants were commissioned „to speak for the last time with the government regarding these demands.“

This demonstration made a great stir in the whole country. Now, when it is a question of fulfilling the real demands of their fascist followers, the Lappo leaders officially declare that they had nothing to do with the demonstration. In spite of it this demonstration is an outcome of the Lappo movement, from whom the peasants have learnt organised action and the use of strong language. This demonstration is very characteristic of the present situation in white Finland as it shows that a ferment has seized even those sections of the population which up to now were considered to be the most reliable dam against the „Bolshevist flood“; and that the basis of the Lappo dictatorship is becoming ever narrower.

International Fighting Day Against Unemployment

Unemployment and the Fight of the Unemployed in Rumania.

By Esko.

In the agrarian countries unemployment assumes quite another form than it does in the countries with a highly developed industry. Rumania is a typically agrarian country. 85 to 90 per cent. of the population live in the rural districts. In spite of all the industrialisation plans of the government, apart from oil agricultural products are the chief source of the national wealth and form the chief articles of export.

If according to the official government figures there are in Rumania 370,000 industrial workers, then we can reckon that 70 per cent. are unemployed. Of the remaining 30 per cent. the greater part are on short time; there are hardly any workers working full time. As an illustration we cite the Vulkan firm, one of the biggest metal enterprises in Rumania, employing in normal times 6,000 workers but now scarcely 1,500. According to official figures, the textile mills have cut down their staffs by 40—60 per cent, while those who are still employed are working 3 to 4 days a week. The smaller undertakings are completely ruined, and not only the workers but also a great part of the owners of these undertakings are today among the ranks of the unemployed. (In the provincial town of Telenescht in Bessarabia, out of 50 undertakings only two are now working). In the village of Moldavitza alone where formerly 1,500 workers were employed in the timber works, today everything is at a standstill. The people stand desperate, facing the horrors of starvation.

We have innumerable cases where everything is at a complete standstill not only in the timber industry, which is in a relatively better position than the others, but also in the textile, tobacco and food industry, which are much more seriously affected by the crisis.

In the towns there are to be seen terrible pictures of misery. Early in the morning, at midday and in the evening one sees crowds of miserably clad proletarians, shivering with cold and hunger, waiting in front of the town hall. There they stand in long queues, their features marked by hunger and misery. Many have forgotten that they were ever workers, so long have they lived on alms, by begging. The so-called unemployment relief consists of a loaf of bread, which is given by the poor law authorities to those who can prove that they have to maintain a family of several persons.

Since the world war agriculture in Rumania has been experiencing a permanent serious crisis. This crisis has been called forth, on the one hand, by the abortive agrarian reform and, on the other, by the depreciation of the Lei. Needless to say, in such circumstances Rumanian economy is very severely hit by the world crisis. The misery and poverty of the peasants has today become proverbial and is the subject of discussion by the whole of the bourgeois press. At the same time it is one of the most serious problems now confronting the government and the parties.

But neither speeches nor resolutions nor the most imposing plans (there is talk in all seriousness of a fascist five-year plan) can in any way help the unemployed industrial and agricultural workers. The government attempted to meet the situation by sending workers to France. As, however, France has now closed its frontiers to immigrant unemployed workers, the government is now proceeding in a bureaucratic-fascist manner. Only skilled workers are recognised as being worker while all others are deported to their native villages. Capitalist society is trying to get rid of its victims. This forcible deportation of unemployed workers is represented as being an act of philanthropy, i. e., the government gives the deportees—and strange to say these are for the most part oppositional revolutionary workers—"free railway tickets". The social democracy has in the press, in Parliament and also in the town councils supported and defended all the measures of the government. It has never gone farther than to put forward unimportant philanthropic demands.

Under the leadership of the Communist Party and the Unitary Trade Unions Unemployed Committees have been set

up in several localities. With their help great unemployed campaigns have been successfully carried out. In Bessarabia and in Transylvania, where the influence of the revolutionary workers is particularly strong, the unemployed campaign has achieved successes. In Oradia the unemployed campaign was connected with the fight against wage cuts. Thus, for instance, on the 5th December last a strike of 2,000 workers was proclaimed under the leadership of the unitary trade unions as a sympathetic strike for the fight of the unemployed and at the same time as a protest strike against the intended wage cut. Also in Temesvar, Czernovitz and other smaller localities a great number of strikes over wages can be recorded and which were led by the unitary trade unions.

It is no exaggeration to say that the experiences in the Rumanian wage struggles can be of great importance to the international labour movement. Experience shows that everywhere where the strike movement is connected with the unemployed movement, the strikes end with complete or partial success. In such cases there was very little danger of strike-breaking and where it did exist it was easy to overcome.

In view of the peculiar political situation of Rumania—on the threshold of a fascist-military dictatorship—there are added to the general fighting slogans the following special slogans: confiscation of the property of the royal family, abolition of the fascist regime, abolition of the laws regarding wage reductions, and before all, the debts and tax liabilities of the peasants.

The work of the Party is suffering as a result of the fierce fraction fights (these it is true, are at an end, but their after-effects are still plainly felt) and also the inclination to sectarianism, which is still very strong. Lack of understanding regarding the ways and means to set up a united front, lack of faith in the capacity of action of the working masses, insufficient work among the agricultural workers and poor peasants—all these are serious hindrances.

But the fight is being continued. The revolutionary workers have learned a great deal from the recent events—strikes, bloody collisions with the police. They will be prepared for the further struggles.

The Fight of the Unemployed in Czechoslovakia.

Prague, 4th February 1931.

The Communist Party appealed for demonstrations of the unemployed workers in all the towns in north west Bohemia to-day. The unemployed answered the call of the Communist Party in great numbers. Everywhere the police attacked the workers with great brutality.

A procession of about 500 unemployed workers led by the communist Senator Stranski marched from Ladovitz to Dux. In Dux they were met by a cordon of police who refused to let them proceed and began to baton the workers. The latter resisted the police attacks and attempted to disarm them, whereupon the police fired about fifty shots at the workers, killing the worker Studnicka and wounding seven others. The communist Senator Stranski was arrested. The news of the bloodbath spread rapidly through Dux and protest demonstrations took place on the streets until late in the evening.

In Teplitz 3,000 unemployed workers demonstrated in front of the editorial offices of the social democratic newspaper „Freiheit“ against the hunger-policy of the social democrats. 500 unemployed workers demonstrated in Leitmeritz.

Later reports show that two workers were killed on the spot during the collision between unemployed workers and the police in Dux. Two other workers have since died of

their wounds, raising the death roll to 4. Mass demonstrations of unemployed workers and collisions with the police occurred yesterday in numerous other towns in north west Bohemia. In **Asch** the police charged the demonstrating workers with bayonets and over 100 workers received wounds of various kinds, mostly in the hands. Severe collisions also took place in **Neudeck** where 3,000 workers demonstrated. 2,000 workers demonstrated in **Chodau** and were attacked by the police with bayonets. Many workers were wounded. 15 workers were arrested during a collision in **Eger**. A collision also occurred in **Reichtenberg** where two workers were arrested. Thousands of unemployed workers demonstrated in **Bruex**, **Karlsbad**, **Pressnitz** and **Gradlitz**.

The police bloodbath in **Dux** was dealt with in the **Czech parliament** to-day when the communist fraction brought in an interpellation demanding the punishment of the police officer. The Prime Minister declared that the police had acted absolutely correctly and in accordance with their instructions. He also announced that no demonstrations would be permitted on the 25th February.

Comrade **Gottwald** spoke in the name of the Communist Party and indignantly condemned the murderous brutality of the police. He placed the responsibility for the murders on the government and exposed the hypocrisy of the social democratic slogan, "law and order", which he pointed out meant starvation and bloodbaths for the workers. In conclusion he called for a political mass strike on the day of the burial of the victims, and for mass demonstrations on the 25th February in defiance of the authorities.

To-day's number of the central organ of the **Czech socialists** calls on the government to put a stop to the activities of all communist leaders.

The **Communist Party of Czechoslovakia** has issued an appeal to the workers of Czechoslovakia in connection with the slaughter of unarmed unemployed workers in **Dux** by the police. The appeal describes the brutalities of the police in **Dux**, where four workers were killed and many wounded, in **Asch**, where scores of workers were injured by police bayonets, in **Chodau**, where many workers were wounded and arrested, and in other towns where the unemployed workers demonstrated under communist leadership, and nails down the responsibility of the government for the slaughter. The appeal calls on the workers not to remain with folded arms, but to protest against the murderous brutalities of the police and organise mass protest strikes. The Communist Party calls for a fifteen minute general protest strike on the day of the funeral, and for mass demonstrations on the 25th February.

The slaughter of unarmed unemployed workers by the police in **Dux** has caused a wave of fierce indignation throughout the country. The miners of the **Minerva** pit in **Bruex** carried out a one-hour protest strike and demanded the release of Senator **Stranski** who was the leader of the unemployed workers and who is now on hunger-strike. His arrest is a feeble attempt to create the impression that the murdered workers were responsible for the bloodbath and not the police. Protest meetings have taken place at a series of pits in the **Ostrau** district. The general spirit is so embittered that the authorities have drafted extra police into the district. In **Prague** protest meetings have taken place at a number of factories. Under the impression created by the slaughter, many social democratic workers have turned their backs on the social democratic leaders and joined the Communist Party. Many telegrams of protest have been sent to the Minister of the Interior.

Prague, 9th February 1931.

The four worker victims of police bloodlust in **Dux** were buried on Saturday and Sunday. The authorities, who had confiscated the corpses, refused to permit a joint burial and ordered the burial of two of the victims in **Nux** on Saturday and the burial of the remaining two victims in **Hostomitz** on Sunday.

On Friday evening a column of workers from **Komotau**, 40 kilometres away, set out to march to the burial, and the next morning a similar column of workers from **Aussig**, also many kilometres distant, set out. Columns of workers marched with crape-hung red flags from all the mining districts in the neighbourhood. The authorities were compelled hurriedly to withdraw their prohibition of demonstrations and proces-

sions. Hundreds of extra police had been drafted into the district, but they did not show themselves on the streets.

20,000 workers took part in the funeral processions. The deputies and senators of the Communist Party marched at the head of the processions and speeches were delivered at the graveside by representatives of the Communist Party. The assembled workers raised their hands in silence and pledged themselves to carry on the class struggle for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship. After the funeral thousands of workers marched through the streets of **Dux** singing revolutionary songs and carrying red flags.

Under the impression of the powerful demonstration, even the bourgeois press warns the government against insisting on its prohibition of demonstrations on International Unemployment Day on the 25th February. The Communist daily, "**Rude Pravo**" publishes a number of letters from social democratic workers declaring their intention of joining the Communist Party under the influence of the **Dux** events. The Communist Party is organising a broad campaign for the legalisation of the 25th February demonstrations.

Comrade Losovsky on the International Day against Unemployment.

Moscow, 4th February 1931.

The newspaper, "**Trud**", publishes an article by Comrade **Losovsky** on the preparations for the International Day against Unemployment. Comrade **Losovsky** reviews the development of unemployment in the various capitalist countries and goes on to declare that this year's International Day against Unemployment co-incides with a tremendous wave of industrial struggles. After the strikes of the 140,000 metal workers in **Berlin**, the 90,000 miners in **Scotland**, the 60,000 miners in the **Ruhr** district, the 160,000 miners in **South Wales**, the 250,000 textile workers in **Great Britain**, and the 35,000 textile workers in **Sweden**, there was no longer any doubt as to whether economic struggles were possible in a period of economic crisis.

These strikes were only the beginning of the struggles; they would be followed by others of a mass character. The standards of living of the working class in all capitalist countries had been reduced. With the assistance of the social-fascists and the trade union bureaucracy, the employers in all countries were conducting an offensive against wages and working conditions. The preparations for the International Day against Unemployment must therefore be conducted in practical connection with the burning problems of the working class. The tasks of the sections of the Red International of Labour Unions were to organise a proletarian counter-offensive on the basis of the united front from below, the linking up of isolated struggles, the development of economic strikes into political struggles, etc.

The unemployed workers must become active fighters in the economic struggles, otherwise the social fascists would misuse them as strikebreakers. The work amongst the unemployed workers must be increased tenfold. The slogan for the reduction of working hours with full wage compensations as a weapon against unemployment must be explained to all workers. The chief questions of the campaign against unemployment must be the questions which at present occupy the workers most of all, i.e. the question of a counter-offensive against wage-cuts and against the worsening of the social-insurance provisions.

The bourgeoisie was attempting to solve the economic crisis by passing its burdens onto the workers and by preparing for war against the Soviet Union. The struggle for the interests of the unemployed must therefore be connected with the struggle against war, with the struggle against the system which breeds unemployment and war. The preparations for International Day against Unemployment must make great use of the comparison between the Soviet Union and the capitalist countries, pointing out that whilst in the Soviet Union there is no unemployment, but rather a shortage of labour power, there is a steady increase of unemployment and mass misery in the capitalist countries. Every worker must be made to understand that the only way out of the unemployment impasse was the dictatorship of the proletariat, the soviet system.

Socialism Liquidates Unemployment.

By A. Deutsch (Moscow).

The Soviet Union has entered the period of Socialism.

At the beginning of the third year of the Five-Year Plan there are no longer any unemployed in the Soviet Union.

There were countries in which for the time being unemployment was not very acute. But there is only one country, namely the Soviet Union, in which unemployment has been finally liquidated because the root cause of unemployment, the capitalist system of economy, has been abolished.

In time of the reconstruction of national economy which has been destroyed by war, civil war and imperialist intervention, there existed unemployment in the Soviet Union. At the same time, however, there was an extensive social service. The unemployed received not only adequate unemployment benefit, but also considerable privileges in regard to housing, clothing and food.

The period of socialist reorganisation of the whole of the national economy was characterised by the Five-Year Plan, the rapid industrialisation of the country, the socialistic transformation of agriculture on the basis of collectivisation, the liquidation of the kulaks as a class, the improvement of the material situation and the raising of the cultural level of the masses, as well as the systematic liquidation of unemployment. At the time of the commencement of the Five-Year Plan there were still 1,468,000 unemployed in the Soviet Union. On the first of January 1930—after the successful carrying out of the first year of the Five-Year Plan—there were only 952,000 unemployed, and on the 1st of January 1931, after the successful carrying out of the second year of the Five-Year Plan, unemployment was completely done away with in the Soviet Union.

The rapid pace of socialist construction, the colossal development of industry and the socialist reconstruction of agriculture resulted in a tremendous increase in the number of workers employed. Whilst in the capitalist countries the number of workers employed is continually declining and millions of workers are doomed to permanent unemployment because capitalism has no prospect whatever of absorbing them in the process of production, in the Soviet Union the working class is continually growing at an ever increasing pace. In the past few years the number of workers employed in the Soviet Union has increased as follows.

1929	5,988,000 workers
1930	7,442,000 "
1931 (anticipated increase)	8,888,000 "

This means that in three years the number of workers employed in industry has increased by 67.5 per cent.

In the third year of the Five-Year Plan 2 million fresh workers will be engaged. The number of workers and employees will increase from 14 million in the year 1930 to 16 million in the year 1931.

One of the most important social-political measures of the Soviet Power was the decree regarding the introduction of the seven-hour day issued on the tenth anniversary of the October Revolution (1927). The going over to the seven-hour day could only take place gradually with the adaptation of the old factories and works, whilst the newly erected factories are immediately commencing to work the seven-hour day. Up to 1930, 50 per cent. of the workers in the State big industry went over to the seven-hour day, and in 1931 the whole of the workers in the State big industry will be working the seven-hour day.

Another important measure was the introduction of the five-day week. By this measure the number of rest days was increased, the health of the workers was greatly improved, the workers had the possibility of making full use of the cultural and educational institutions, and at the same time there was a more rational utilisation of the existing workshops and plants.

It is obvious that the introduction of the seven-hour day and the five-day week contributed greatly to the abolition of unemployment.

With the liquidation of unemployment socialist construction entered on a new phase, which is characterised by the shortage of labour. The demand for workers, not only skilled but also unskilled, cannot be satisfied in good time and to a sufficient extent. The fulfilment of the building plans calls for

hundreds of thousands of skilled workers and millions of semi-skilled and non-skilled workers from the ranks of the former artisans, the women, and poor peasants. Thus, the Soviet Union is able to give its Labour Exchanges a quite new function. The Labour Exchanges are converted from institutions whose task it was to find positions for unemployed workers and employees, into State offices for recruiting and training new workers. Every Soviet citizen who wishes to work has the possibility of registering immediately at the Labour Exchange and has the right to be sent to work at once. The Labour Exchange must find him suitable work within three days or send him to a training centre, at the cost of the Labour Exchange.

In order further to meet the demand for highly skilled workers it is intended in the year 1931 to retrain 600,000 adult workers in the factories and place them on skilled work. Further, 200,000 highly skilled workers must be promoted to leading positions. Tens of thousands of workers are studying in the technical, vocational and high schools, and in the course of the year will take over leading functions in industry as qualified technicians and engineers.

In addition, in the year 1931 1,206,000 apprentices will be trained in the factory schools. Thousands of foreign expert workers are already working in the factories and workshops of the Soviet Union and assisting in the work of socialist construction.

The great successes in this sphere are one of the heaviest blows which the Soviet Union has dealt world capitalism. They show the working class of the whole world that only under a socialist economic system is it possible to introduce a planned organisation of work and thereby finally and completely liquidate unemployment.

Conference on Female Labour in the Soviet Union.

Moscow, 4th February 1931.

In view of the abolition of unemployment and the increasing labour demands of soviet industry it has become necessary to utilise female labour power to an increasing extent. A conference has just been opened in Moscow to deal with the problems of female labour and to secure the employment of 1,600,000 women and girl workers during the present year, in accordance with the decision of the Soviet government and the Communist Party.

Comrade Abolin of the Central Council of Soviet Labour Unions opened the conference. He pointed out that an increasing use was being made of female labour power under capitalism also, but only in order to replace higher-paid male labour power. The employment of women workers in the capitalist countries resulted in increasing unemployment for the workers. In the Soviet Union, however, the increasing use of female labour power was the result of the liquidation of unemployment. Equal payment for equal work was further the absolute principle for the employment of female labour in the Soviet Union. This year alone no less than 150,000 women workers would be trained by the apparatus of the People's Commissariat for Labour. Further, the apprentices training schools would absorb 330,000 girls, almost half of the number of the new pupils. The women workers had proved themselves every bit as eager and as capable as the men in the work for the construction of socialism. They were taking a great part in the shock group movement and in the socialist competitive scheme. In some cases, women workers have a greater output than men. An urgent necessity was that women should be freed from the slavery of the individual household in order that they could participate in the socialist constructive work. During the current year the number of day nurseries, Kindergaerten, etc., would be increased tenfold and cater for three million children. Great efforts would also be made to improve and extend the socialist restaurant system. All these measures aimed at emancipating the women from the century old chains of the kitchen and housework, and placing them beside the men as free and equal socialist workers.

THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

Threatening Wage Cuts on the English Railways.

By R. Bishop (London).

The four big British railway companies are at present driving forward with heavy demands upon the workers employed by them. Their demands and the counter-demands of the Unions are being argued before the National Wages Board.

This Board was set up under the Railway Act of 1921 and is presided over by an "independent" chairman, Sir Harold Morris, K. C. C. The members of the Board consist of representatives of the Federation of British Industry, Association of British Chambers of Commerce, the Co-operative Union, the Trades Union Congress, the railway companies and the three rail unions.

The Board commenced its sittings on Jan. 19 and is still in Session. The Companies are demanding immediate reductions of 6/- a week, with the present minimum to be reduced from 40/- to 38/- per week. Drastic reductions are also demanded from youths, male and female clerical staff and supervisory grades.

In addition conditions of service are being vigorously attacked. The companies demand the abolition of the guaranteed working week and that the standard weekly hours (whether 48 or less) shall be worked as and when the companies require, with payment only to be made for time actually worked.

If the companies proposals are accepted, this would mean that workers could be made to work 12 or 13 hours one day and only 1 hour the next. In one day they might work 8 hours in four turns of 2 hours each with an hour or more to hang about in between. This of course means the practical elimination of overtime payment.

It is estimated by locomotive drivers and firemen that the suggested alteration would mean a loss of wages amounting to 30/- per week for certain men.

The Railway Unions' officials have been compelled by the tremendous opposition amongst working railwaymen to put forward counter demands for an increase.

In the case of the National Union of Railwaymen, the biggest of the three Unions and the only one covering the entire industry, a £3 weekly minimum wage is the demand. The Railway Clerks Association and the Locomotive Engineers Society are demanding increases for the various grades that they cover.

These are the demands and counter-demands that are being considered by the Board.

In presenting the case for cuts, amounting to £9,500,000, Mr. Lazenby, the companies' spokesman made great play with the fact that "labour costs" were, despite economies, nearly 2½ times what they were in 1913. In addition he stated railway receipts were down by £10½ millions as compared with 1929.

Net revenue for 1930 would, it was estimated, be worse than that of 1929 by about £8¼ millions.

"Thus", said Lazenby, "for the two years there is a total shortage of about £13¼ millions, or approximately 27 per cent of the standard revenue.

He also estimated that in 1931 there would be a further fall in receipts making a total decrease of about £13,000,000 for the year 1931 compared with 1929.

Marchbanks, Assistant Industrial Secretary of the National Union of Railwaymen, is replying on behalf of that union. He has gone to "great pains" to show how drastic are the companies demands. He has made much of the fact there are at present 100,000 railwaymen who are receiving less than 46/- per week. He gave examples of the rationalisation that has taken place on the railways and has resulted in stagnation in the grades, speeding up of work and numerous dismissals.

Because of the tremendous publicity that the Board is getting, the Union officials are putting up an excellent case against the cuts in order to gull railwaymen into the belief that the Board cannot possibly accept the Companies' proposals. They know that the tremendous opposition of the workers to any suggestion of cuts has to be kept in check in order to prevent unofficial action being taken.

There can be no doubt of the fact that the Wages Board will return a decision against the workers and in favour of the companies. The attitude of the Union officials will be to secure the acceptance of the Board's decision, pointing out their arguments to the men and stating that they have done all that could be done under the circumstances.

The officials have already agreed to the suspension of the guaranteed week in South Wales during the miners strike and have now agreed to its suspension in Lancashire owing to the cotton dispute.

The **Railwaymen's Minority Movement** are driving forward for action against the Companies proposals and against the Arbitration Board. On February 22 a National Conference of militant railwaymen will be held in London to secure the necessary action to defeat the employers' plans.

AGAINST IMPERIALIST WAR

Reply to the Questionnaire of the French Journal „Vue“.

By Maxim Gorky.

1. Is There a Danger of "One More War"?

The governments of Europe are expending enormous sums from the national income on armaments. We all know that even revolvers are not purchased to adorn drawing rooms, but for murder or suicide. Still less can we suppose that armoured cruisers, submarines, tanks and the like are destined for the purpose of peaceful couring.

2. "What May Be Its Causes?"

We have to recognise that the main cause is the fact of the existence of capitalists—people whose greed for profits has become a disease having a remarkable resemblance to satyriasis. It is not necessary to show how monstrous is the existence of a small class, or rather a group of maniacs, who have seized on the riches of the earth, and irresponsibly rule the lives of the people, i. e. the toiling masses.

The crime of the existence of the capitalist system has been pointed out by all people who possess the good habit of thinking honestly, for example the economist **Sismond**, who was very far from being a socialist. At the beginning of the 19th century, he understood perfectly that:

"A great part of social expenditure is intended for the defence of the rich against the poor."

As we know, this testimony by honest men was put on an unquestionable scientific basis by **Karl Marx**, and, on the basis of **Marx and Engels'** philosophy of history, **Lenin** continued it to its logical conclusion, and pointed out to the Russian working class the direct, practical path to freedom from the unbearable servitude of brainless and untalented people.

We have now a legitimate right to state that war is carried on by the rich, not only in order to strengthen their power over the poor, but also against each other, through the agency of the poor and with the help of the clever, i. e. with the help of those of the intelligentsia who serve the inhuman aims of capital. This service is one of the most disgusting spectacles of our world.

Here, for example, is what was said by a certain **Churchill**, an Englishman, in August 1930 at a meeting of English manufacturers in the City:

"The British nation has no intention to give up its control over the life and development of India. The Round Table Conference has no authority to prepare a constitution for India. The British Parliament will not be bound by any agreement reached at this Conference.

24,000 Indian politicians and their dupes are in prison. Disorder is being firmly and rapidly put down. We must announce that the British nation is not giving up its mission in India. We have no intention of losing the brightest diamond in the British crown. The loss of India would mean the end of the British Empire."

The cynicism of this speech should have outraged the Christian feelings of the Archbishop of Canterbury, but it did not do so. This Archbishop is also an Englishman and also a cynic, and he demonstrates his official "humanitarianism" only when this is necessary and advantageous to his employers, as was the case with regard to the Soviet Union.

The quietest of all the frenzied crew who decide the fate of nations is the King of Spain. He murders his people in silence, while Pilsudski, for instance, formulates for the reporters his "divine right" to slay in the words of a megalomaniac:

"I am one of the men of strength, even. I may say, one of those with exceptionally perfect gifts of will power and ability to make decisions."

We can give many more facts which prove the fundamental and monstrous fact that the lives of nations are directed by people who are absolutely insane and it is quite clear that as long as power over the lives and wills of nations remains in the hands of these people, war and every kind of "peaceful robbery", and social catastrophies in general, are inevitable.

3. What Kind of War Will It Be?

The kind of war that will take place was very eloquently described in August 1930 by one of the late premiers of France, M. Cailleaux:

"Away with illusions. The last war was a war of heavy artillery, machine guns and submarines. The next war, if mankind is so insane as to agree to it, will be a chemical war, a gas war. In 1914—18 the combatants perished in millions. In the year X, which, I hope, will never get into the calendar, the civil population will be annihilated. There are no means of protecting the civil population. At the present time there are gases which penetrate through the skin without any wounds, unnoticed by the victims, which in a short time cause violent convulsions and then lead to a chronic and incurable idiocy. Henceforth these tortures are intended not only for the fighting ranks, but chiefly for the civil population."

At the same time, in August, the testimony of M. Cailleaux was confirmed by one of the most competent generals in military matters, Berthold von Deimling, on the basis of an attentive study of the air manoeuvres which were carried out this year in Italy, France and England.

"In Lyons, before the arrival of the "hostile" airplanes, the population received gas masks, and medical first aid was organised. The city was defended by a special squadron of airplanes, electric searchlights and anti-aircraft guns. Nevertheless the attacking squadrons penetrated to the city and loosed their bombs. The latest manoeuvres proved that anti-aircraft guns cannot be of much use, because airplanes can always rise higher or lower than the bursting shrapnel. The English manoeuvres proved that the peaceful population suffers far more from the shell fragments than the enemy."

4. What Did the War of 1914—18 Cost the French People, and What Could They Have Had if There Had Been No War?

This has been well calculated by the journal "Vue". 887 billion francs were expended, all belonging to the toiling people, for there is no other kind of money in the world. And how many healthy, socially valuable people were destroyed?

If I am not mistaken, in every country there is a law to "prevent and suppress crime".

It would seem that the direct and logical conclusion to be drawn from these threats of war must be as follows: People who propose to bring about the mass destruction of humanity in order to defend their own insignificant interests, these people should be isolated.

There are very humane methods to isolate such socially dangerous people. For instance, they might be sent to the Solomon Islands or some other place inhabited by cannibals. I am absolutely convinced that my suggestion cannot be looked on as too harsh, especially for Messrs. Churchill, Chamberlain, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Poincaré, and such people. But instead of acting according to the law for the prevention and suppression of crime, and putting forward some plan for the isolation of the criminals, Cailleaux draws a most unexpected conclusion. In his opinion, the salvation of mankind consists of a repetition of the ancient myth of Prometheus — people must chain up the new Prometheus. "If mankind wishes to exist, it must fetter the new Prometheus, science."

So this is the barbarism to which the world is brought by the power of the capitalists, — the class whose ideology states that it is the very class which creates and preserves culture. The capitalists have found that science has given them sufficient means for a fratricidal strife and to defend

themselves against the working class, and so — enough of science! There will be nothing surprising if Europe like the U.S.A., gives birth to its own "lowbrow" Bryants, and if in the near future we are witnesses of "monkey trials", where the prosecutors will be archbishops.

Voroshilov Issues Army Order.

Moscow, 26th January 1931.

The following Army Order signed by comrade Voroshilov is published in the soviet press:

"In view of the unanimous wish of the IX. Congress of the young Communist Leninist League of the Soviet Union to take over the patronage of the air fleet of the Red workers and peasants Army, the Y. C. L. L. which is decorated with the Order of the Red Banner, is to be regarded as and from the 25th January 1931 as the patron of the air fleet."

5. How to Avoid War.

War will be avoided by doing the same as in the Soviet Union. In order to put an end to criminal reality, we must start with something. The working class commenced absolutely correctly: they set up their own government in the country. The results of 13 years of their activity, while giving rise to the fiercest hate on the part of the scoundrels of all the world, arouses and will continue to arouse the active sympathy of the working masses of all lands and of all honest people in them.

6. In my opinion it is impossible to speak about the "sovereignty" of nations in places where the sovereign is the monstrosity of capitalism.

January 31st, 1931.

Maxim Gorky.

(Article written by Maxim Gorky for a special number on the "Coming Last War" in the French journal "Vue".)

Fascist Italy's Swollen Armaments.

By Nemo.

Since Mussolini's march on Rome Italy has been one of those countries that most greatly threaten world peace and, as imperialist great Powers, create the danger of a new war. Not only Mussolini's bombastic bellicose speeches, which can best be compared with the sabre-rattling speeches of Kaiser Wilhelm, but also Italy's growing expenditure on armaments, the militarisation of the whole nation, the setting up of a system of military alliances, and also the intensified antagonisms in the Mediterranean are symptomatic of the growing danger of war caused by fascism. The less fascism is in a position to give the broad masses of the people work and bread, the more desperately it attempts to divert the attention of these masses to the necessity of foreign-political adventures. Italian imperialism's desire for further expansion, which is strengthened by fascism, increases the causes of conflict in the imperialist camp and renders an armed conflict with its opponents inevitable sooner or later.

Although fascism is experiencing a severe economic and financial crisis, is unable to give work to hundreds of thousands and is reducing the level of wages of the proletariat far below the minimum necessary for existence, Italy's unproductive expenditure on armaments is growing from year to year. **Italy's military budget has increased from 650 millions in pre-war time to 6000 million Lire at the present time.** Just as in the France of Poincaré, which has an excess of gold, so also in the Italy of Mussolini, which is financially poor, the military expenditure accounts for 30 per cent of the total budget. In spite of the approaching Disarmament Conference, Italy's expenditure on armament is this year considerably higher than it was last year. Thus, the expenditure on the army shows an increase of about 88 million Lire and that on the navy 62 million Lire as compared with 1930, 1,500 million Lira have already been earmarked for naval armaments alone, while the expenditure on the building of fresh warships has increased by a full 20 per cent. It must be remembered in this connection that Italy's expenditure on armaments showed a considerable increase last year. In the year 1930 the military budget increased from 2,877 to 3,177 million Lira, the

naval budget from 1,476 to 1,576 million Lira, and the air budget from 718 to 798 million Lira, to which must be added 20 million Lira for the fascist militia.

Taken in all, Italy's expenditure on armaments in the year 1930 showed an increase of 5,000 million to 5,500 million Lira. In spite of the prevailing economic disaster ever increasing burdens for war-preparations are to be placed on the broad working masses of Italy. The Finance Minister **Morsoni** declared that, should Mussolini deem it necessary to increase the military budget, **"every financial sacrifice must be willingly made and not refused, because it is a question of the sacred duty of defending the fatherland."**

With the aid of the huge sums squeezed out of the mass of the people, the military forces of Italy have been considerably improved in the last two years both as regards quantity and quality. In Italy every able bodied man must serve in the army for 18 months, so that **every year** nearly **300,000** are undergoing training, while the Italian army possesses ten more infantry divisions than the French. To this is to be added **the colonial troops, numbering 40,000 men.**

In addition to the active army, Italy maintains a **militia**, which in the year 1930 was organised on a territorial basis. The militia is about **400,000** strong and serves in the event of war to reinforce the army, two black-shirt battalions being allotted to every division. The black-shirt battalions must be regarded as the fascist cadres both in peace time and war.

One of the important tasks of the national militia consists in **giving military training to the fascist youth organisations.** Boys and girls of the age of 8 to 14 years are organised in the "Ballila"; young people of the age of 14 to 18 are organised in the "Avanguardia". In the year 1930 the "Ballila" increased its membership by 110,000, thus bringing it up to a total of **950,000**; the "Avanguardia" increased its strength by 90,000 and thus numbers **400,000**. The "Ballila" is divided into 616 legions and receives its military training from the 6,050 non-commissioned officers, 20,000 instructors and 10,000 sub-instructors supplied by the militia. As soon as the young fascists have reached the age of 18 they can sign on in the militia for a period of 10 years.

Since November 1930 **compulsory military training for the whole of the youth has existed.** According to article 1 of the law in question, the purpose of this preliminary training of the youth is to supply the army, navy and the air service with recruits who have already received military training. Only the members of the fascist organisations are exempt from this compulsory training as they receive an even more thorough military training. Simultaneously with the introduction of compulsory military training for young people the active military service for adults has been reorganised, so that the reserve army will in one year comprise twice as many, and in two years three times as many trained men than under the former system. Since according to the French disarmament thesis reserves are not to be reckoned to the military strength of a country, it is now possible also for Italy to conceal its true military strength and to evade any disarmament obligations.

Mussolini is paying equal attention to strengthening the **Italian sea and air forces.** The Italian navy consists for the greater part of modern units, even though its total tonnage of 267,000 tons is only half that of the French. The Italian navy already possesses 1,000 aircraft. As according to the words of Mussolini, "Italy's airfleet is to be so large as to darken the sun", the number is to be increased to 2,000. According to its achievements the Italian airfleet is regarded by experts as more efficient than the French airfleet. Further, there exists as an independent organisation an **air-defence militia**, in which men over military age and those medically unfit for military service are organised. The members of the **"women's militia"** are also to be drawn into the air defence force.

Apart from the militia and the fascist organisations there are numerous other organisations in Italy that are likewise engaged in giving military training to the population. Thus only last year the "National Riflemen's League" was founded and received generous grants from the State. The fascist organisations are devoting special attention to the military organisation and training of the numerous Italians living abroad in order to promote the expansionist aims of Italian imperialism in the Western Mediterranean and in Africa.

Mussolini has compared Europe to an overheated boiler which is bound to explode some time or other, but Italy's armament policy shows that Mussolini himself is the one who is heating the boiler that will destroy the fascist regime.

INDIA

On the Draft Platform of Action of the C. P. of India.

The Proletarian Freethinkers' International have requested us to publish the following discussion article on the Platform of Action of the C. P. of India.

The growing importance of an organised anti-religious fight has been recognised, especially after the anti-Soviet campaign initiated by Pope Pius XI., and is expressed in the restoration of a revolutionary leadership in the Proletarian Freethinkers' International. It was not by chance that under the old social fascist leadership the Proletarian Freethinkers' International remained a European International. The social fascist leaders of the Proletarian Freethinkers' International were members of the II. International, which as a result of its colonial policy has lost all credit among the revolutionary workers and peasants of the colonial countries and has been exposed as a lackey of the imperialist bourgeoisie.

The Proletarian Freethinkers' International has now made it its task to create with the aid of the revolutionary workers and peasants, especially in the colonies, powerful anti-religious organisations which will support the emancipation struggle of the colonial proletariat. The tremendous upsurge of the revolutionary movement in the colonies renders this very necessary. Therefore, the Proletarian Freethinkers' International welcomes the setting up of a Platform of Action by the Communist Party of India, which by the sharp Marxist formulation of the demand for the separation of the Church from the State and the disendowment of the religious organisations, enters into a natural alliance with the Proletarian Freethinkers' International.

Nevertheless, we are of the opinion that this demand must be concretely formulated before the masses of the colonial proletariat. The demand for a broad anti-religious fight must be set up and substantiated. It is by no means sufficient to point to the role played by the Church; before all things the way for organised resistance must be indicated. Before all things also because the Indian proletarians are confronted not only by the feebly disguised churches of the imperialists, but also by the native churches which interfere in the colonial fight for emancipation and are more difficult to expose. There is no doubt that the position of the churches will be severely shaken by organising the pariahs for the fight against the caste system. But it must also be recognised and expressed that the roots of religion lie not only in the past.

Regarding this question Lenin said (Lenin über Religion, page 27, Verlag für Literatur und Politik):

"In the modern capitalist countries these roots are mainly of a **social nature.** The social oppression of the working masses, their apparent absolute impotence in face of the blind forces of capitalism, which brings to the ordinary working people daily and hourly sufferings and torments a thousand times more frightful than all extraordinary events such as war, earthquakes etc. . . . that is where the deepest present roots of religion are to be sought. "Fear produced the goods." Fear of the blind power of capital, which is a blindly ruling power because it cannot be forseen by the masses of the people and threatens at every step the proletarian and small property owner, and which "suddenly", "unexpectedly", "haphazardly", brings them ruin, plunges them into beggary, pauperism, prostitution, which can deliver them over to death from starvation, and does actually do so... **that is the source of present-day religion,** which the materialist before all must bear in mind if he does not wish to remain in the nursery stage of materialism."

The problem of the fight against religion is very important for India, because here the religions disputes, that are artificially fomented by the English play a by no means insignificant role. The imperialists have succeeded in not a few instances in taking advantage of the antagonisms, to the detriment of the general fight of the proletariat for emancipation.

The Colonial Commission of the C.P. of Great Britain has already pointed to the necessity of a more concrete formulation

of the question of the anti-religious fight. The Commission referred in this respect to a necessary linking up of this question with the national question, whereby there is indicated the extraordinary importance of the setting up of anti-religious organisations, although this is not said in so many words.

The Communist Party cannot place anti-religious propaganda in the foreground of its work. It has to approach the backward and most backward sections of the workers and peasants who have not yet realised the connection between Church and capitalism, who have not yet recognised the role of the Church in the capitalist system. The Party must organise and lead the united front against capitalist and imperialist suppression. For this purpose it must get hold of the most backward workers and peasants. It must avoid, "from the standpoint of real progress in the class struggle" (Lenin), dividing the workers into religious and anti-religious workers, nevertheless the fight against religion must not become a "private affair". The Party must at the same time organise anti-religious propaganda and lead this fight. Never was the time more favourable to create, together with the Proletarian Freethinkers' International, an anti-Religious mass movement. The experience of the Proletarian Freethinkers' International must be utilised by the Indian anti-religious movement.

We therefore propose that there be inserted in the Platform of Action concrete formulae on the necessity of setting up anti-religious organisations, and a short clause on the special importance of overcoming the religious antagonisms as one of the most important preconditions for the successful emancipation struggle of the Indian toilers.

SOCIALIST CONSTRUCTION IN THE SOVIET UNION

Important Alterations in the Organisational Structure of the Soviet Trade Unions.

The "Pravda" of January 29 writes as follows in its leading article:

The XVI. Party Congress of the C.P.S.U.—the Party Congress of the fully developed Bolshevik offensive on the whole front of socialist construction—gave the trade unions the task of "continuing and completing the turning of the trade unions to production, to active participation in the building up of a socialist economy, the overcoming of petty-bourgeois vacillations among the backward elements of the working class, closely connecting this whole work with the strengthening of the work for the workers' food supply, the protection of labour and the fight against bureaucratism in the State and economic organs and also in the trade union apparatus."

The trade unions, which are conducting an inexorable fight against opportunism and against the old craft traditions which were cultivated by the old Right trade union leadership, have under the leadership of the C.C. of the C.P.S.U. commenced energetic work for the realisation of the directives of the XVI. Party Congress.

The tremendous tasks of the third year of the Five-Year Plan—the decisive year for the realisation of the Five-Year Plan in four years—its tremendous tempo (45 per cent increase in the output of industry, collectivisation of 50 per cent of the peasant farms, 17,000 million capital investments, more than 2 million fresh workers drawn into production etc.) demand the mobilisation of all the forces of the proletariat, the utmost elasticity, precision and energy of the Party, and the economic and trade union leaders.

The present structure of the trade unions, which embrace enormous masses of workers in the various branches of production, renders it difficult to organise the growing activity of the proletarian masses for solving the concrete question of production. It suffices to point to the fact that the metal workers' union has 1,200,000 members, the building workers' union 1,300,000, the agricultural workers' union 1,500,000 etc. In connection with the dividing up of the economic organs, the metal workers' union, for instance, will have to deal with 28 various economic organs, the chemical workers' union with 30 etc. The mammoth-character of the organisational struc-

ture of the trade unions is a hindrance to the further development of work and renders the concrete daily participation of the trade unions in socialist industry much more difficult.

On the other hand, it is much more difficult for a union comprising such enormous masses to make a careful investigation of the special conditions of work and life of the various categories of workers, to defend their interests more effectively and to conduct a concrete fight against bureaucratism.

As a result of the tremendously rapid growth of the number of workers and of the creative activity of the proletarian masses (58 per cent. of all workers are participating in socialist competition, 50 per cent. of the workers are members of the shock brigades) the shortcomings of the organisational structure of the trade unions are becoming increasingly apparent.

The decision of the Plenum of the Central Council of the Soviet Trade Unions regarding the division of a number of trade unions is therefore highly opportune.

The division is made according to the Bolshevik principle which has been tested in the socialist construction of the organisation of the trade unions according to industry. Out of the metal workers union the following 7 unions were formed: 1. the union of the workers in the smelting industry; 2. engineering workers working for the transport system; 3. workers producing agricultural machines; 4. workers in the electro-technical industry and electric power works; 5. auto, tractor and airship industry; 6. workers producing and working up of non-ferrous metals; 7. engineering workers. The reorganisation of the other unions is carried out on the same principle. (In place of the existing 23 unions 45 unions will be set up).

In the interest of a broad-scaled and increased attraction of workers to the solution of production questions and their elaboration by the trade unions, production sections are being organised in the most important industries. In order to make the greatest possible use of the production experiences of all categories of workers, the Plenum of the Central Council recommends the convening of special meetings and production conferences of professional groups (moulders, fitters, hewers etc.).

The division of the trade unions brings them nearer to the production and to the masses. In a whole number of unions an immediate connection of the central committees of the unions with the factories must be set up.

The divided unions will be better able to bring the broadest working masses under their leadership, to get them to collaborate in the solution of the concrete practical tasks. The trade unions will be better able to carry out the tasks of workers' protection, of improving the material and cultural standard of living of the workers. Here a tremendous task confronts the workers. It suffices to point out for instance that the social insurance fund is being raised to 2,138,000,000 roubles in the year 1931. Their correct employment, the reorganisation of the work of the social insurance institutions and the energetic extermination of bureaucratism in practice—all this requires an unceasing and most active participation of the trade unions.

A further improvement of the material and cultural position of the workers presupposes a fundamental reorganisation of the consumers' co-operatives, whose work was described by the December Plenum of the C.C. and the C.C.C. of the C.P.S.U. as unsatisfactory. But the reorganisation of the work of the co-operatives is impossible without the most active participation of the trade unions and the organisation of mass control by the workers. The trade union leaders have to promote the formation of a network of factory co-operatives, to be organised by the factory councils together with co-operatives, in factories with 2000 workers. The factory councils have to control the daily work of these co-operatives, which have to organise a co-operative shop in the works, dining halls, vegetable gardens, pig breeding establishments etc.

The divided trade unions will be better able to solve all these questions, to organise better the work of retraining the backward sections of workers, granting premiums to skilled workers in connection with the struggle against fluctuation of labour power.

The trade unions will, as a real school of Communism for millions of workers, play a tremendous role in the realisation of the Five-Year Plan in four years, in the completing of the basis of socialist economy.

CHINA

The Chinese "Young Red Guard" Defends the Soviet Districts.

By Huo Yan.

Although the imperialist and Kuomintang press, with their loud outcry over the "Communist murder bands", are stirring up the whole capitalist world against the Red Army, and although the Trozkyists and liquidators such as **Chen-Du-Hsiu** and company describe it as a "band of robbers" and the Red soldiers as "slum proletarians", the Red Army still remains the armed force of the Chinese revolutionary workers and peasants which has won and is defending the Soviet Power. By its side, as an auxiliary and reserve force, there stands the armed "Young Red Guard".

In order to convey to the European proletariat an idea of the activity of the Defence organisations in the Soviet districts, and especially of the "Young Red Guard", we publish the following letter (with a few shortenings) from the Soviet district in South West Kiangsi:

The workers in South West Kiangsi know that the Red Army is conducting the fight for their interests, for the abolition of the domination of the big landowners and for the distribution of the land. Therefore, every peasant is proud when his sons are fighting in the Red Army, and he is treated with particular respect by his neighbours and supported in every way. As soon as news arrives of the coming of the Red Army joyous enthusiasm prevails among the population. If, however, news arrives of the approach of the white Kuomintang troops, even the children cry with fear and terror and panic spread everywhere, for it is known that the Whites wantonly murder people, destroy houses, seize the cattle and food and violate women . . .

Reckoning all the districts of South West Kiangsi together, the "Young Red Guard" is over 100,000 strong. Its members come mostly from the families of poor peasants and agricultural workers. Not only the male Youth but also a considerable number of the female Youth are in its ranks. Right from their tenderest years they have suffered enough from exploitation by the big landowners, and now, under the Soviet power, have attained their freedom. The "Young Red Guard", the defence organisation of the working Youth, is taking the most active part in all the armed fights and is supporting the Red Army in every way.

Crushing Defeat of the Nanking Troops.

Shanghai, February 10, 1931.

The bourgeois press in the provinces under the Nanking Government now openly admit that the first stage of the offensive of the Nanking troops against the Soviet districts has proved a complete failure. In the fighting near Tun Chu the troops of General Mao Tse Dun have inflicted a severe defeat on the Nanking troops, although the latter were well supplied with arms and munitions by the foreign Powers and were under the leadership of German officers. The Red Army took 20,000 prisoners, captured seven guns, 50 machine-guns, 40 bombthrowers and a great quantity of weapons and other munitions. The whole of the 18th Division of the Nanking troops, together with their divisional Commander, were taken prisoners by the Reds. In the provinces of Honan and Hupeh it has been possible greatly to increase the territory under the control of the Soviets.

The members of the "Young Red Guard" work with the greatest joy in their organisation. They themselves maintain good discipline according to the model of the Red Army. They regard membership of their organisation as training for the Red Army, in whose ranks they wish to serve later. At sunset the "Young Red Guard" are to be seen everywhere drilling in the fields. They often invite the officers of the Red Army in order to learn from them. Then one often hears the question of a young guardist to the officer: "Am I sufficiently qualified to become a member of the Red Army?" An answer in the affirmative causes the young aspirant to blush with pride and

joy. If, however, the officer points out to him his faults and shortcomings, this acts as an incentive for him to redouble his efforts to correct his faults so as to qualify as soon as possible for the Red Army.

"The Young Red Guard" have made it their most important task to protect the local Soviets and to combat the counter-revolutionary elements. When the "Defence Militia" of the big landowners attacked a village in the district of Shing-Kuo in South West Kiangsi, a detachment of the "Young Red Guards", armed only with primitive weapons such as flint-locks, spears etc., succeeded by heroic fighting and with the support of the masses in disarming the white guards. This was the very best propaganda, for after this victory the young workers in this district simply flocked into the "Young Red Guard".

During the fight of the Red Army for the capture of the town of Tchi-An in September last, the "Young Red Guard" voluntarily joined the storming party. To the singing of the "Internationale" and the "Young Guard" the young warriors marched to the front with the greatest courage and burning enthusiasm.

Another example of the fighting courage of the "Young Red Guard" was the defence of a village in the neighbourhood of Tchi-An which was surprised by the Whites just when the village Soviet was holding a meeting. As the "Red Defence Corps" had been sent to fight in another district, the village Soviet was threatened. It was only thanks to the "Young Red Guard" that the counter-revolutionary troops were driven back.

"The Young Red Guard" in the Soviet district in South West Kiangsi is continually growing in the fight. The class-conscious toiling Youth have recognised where their place is: in the common fight with the adult workers and peasants for a Soviet China!

IN THE INTERNATIONAL

An Important Session of the C. C. of the C. P. of France.

By J. Bénier (Paris).

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of France held an important session in January last, in which representatives of the Comintern and of the R.I.L.U. participated. The lively discussions on our trade union work, our struggle against war and the reanimation of the Y.C.L. showed that the Party has not yet carried out the "decisive turn" which the Central Committee decided upon at its July Session.

The January session made a thorough analysis of the present economic crisis and its perspectives. Hitherto we had dealt only in a very superficial manner with this problem, a circumstance which together with the general theoretical weakness of our Party membership led to erroneous appraisals of the situation.

The Central Committee stated that France is at present suffering from an open economic crisis of a particularly severe character. At the same time the Central Committee energetically combated the "fatalistic" deviations by emphasising the important role of the subjective action of the Party for the proletarian solution of the crisis. It was pointed out that in France one cannot yet speak of an "open political crisis" as some members of the C.C. have done, but there undoubtedly exists a tendency of the economic crisis to develop into a political crisis.

The C.C. revised in one point the political estimation of the situation given by the last Manifesto of the Pol-Bureau. The formula: "It is necessary to overthrow fascism as a government system no matter what the composition of the given government may be" is incorrect, because fascism has not yet become a government system. It is true, the bourgeoisie is proceeding from general fascist agitation to the organisation of fascism, but it is skilfully combining them with the forms of the democratic dictatorship and is also nourishing Parliamentary illusions, whilst at the same time employing fascist methods. Hence, a fight must be conducted against the introduction of these methods, and this fight must not be schematic. Further, the C.C. characterised the present situation as one containing the elements of a new revolutionary upsurge of the

masses, comprising the workers, the poor peasants and the activity of the warmongers we must declare that our Party colonial population.

The improvement of our trade union work was an important subject of the whole session. The aims laid down by the July session in regard to strengthening numerically the C.G.T.U. and improving its political line have not been achieved. On the contrary, the session recorded symptoms of a worsening of the situation, as anarchic-syndicalist and reformist tendencies are still strong in the unitary federations.

The unitary federations are too much isolated from the elementary interests of the working class, their line is too abstract and they often constitute only a poor imitation of the Party while neglecting their specific trade union tasks. It is urgently necessary that close contact be immediately established with the working class.

All these weaknesses and shortcomings have been recognised by the members of the C.C. who adopted a comprehensive resolution in which the improvement of our trade union work is declared to be one of the most important tasks confronting the whole Party.

"The whole trade union work of the Party", declares the resolution, "must be conducted in close contact with the energetic struggle of the Party against the threefold plan of the bourgeoisie and of the reformist leaders, i.e. against the plan of misery, the preparations for fascism and the war-preparations against the Soviet Union."

All these problems will be thoroughly discussed at a big trade union conference of the Party convened for 28/29 February.

The resolution was unanimously adopted, only Comrade Vassart abstaining from voting. This comrade had already for a long time expressed opportunist opinions regarding many questions, and his attitude in regard to trade union unity means that he is in favour of the liquidation of the C.G.T.U., proceeding from the assumption that the reformist C.G.T. with its rotten apparatus can be guided on to the revolutionary path.

This attitude, which means a retreat in face of the reformist manoeuvres, has been sharply criticised by the C.C. and the representative of the Comintern. The views of another comrade, who questioned the leading role of the Party and who considered that the mistakes of the C.G.T.U. are due to wrong methods of work on the part of the trade union leaders, were likewise sharply criticised. The result of this discussion can be summed up in the formula: **100 per cent. of our efforts must be exerted for improved trade union work.**

The position of the Young Communist League was also subjected to a thorough analysis, and it was asserted that the whole Party displays no interest in the activity of the Y.C.L. and the influence of the latter is declining, because sectarian tendencies are gaining the upper hand in it and because the Y.C.L. does not defend the economic interests of the working youth (there are only a few youth sections in the C.G.T.U.).

The resolution, which was unanimously adopted, demands of the Party consistent and persistent work in support of the youth. The latter shall elaborate a concrete programme for the defence of the daily interests of the young workers. The Y.C.L. has worked out a plan of work which is to be dealt with by all organisations of the Party.

The third point of the agenda was the **fight against war**. The reporter of the Polbureau showed by numerous examples to what an extent French imperialism has already made its war-preparations. The factories producing war material are the only ones fully occupied; armaments have been greatly increased; a war psychology is being created by means of chauvinistic parades, patriotic school instruction, the cinema, lectures in the soldiers' barracks, military training in the sports organisations etc. France is placing herself **at the head of the European front against the Soviet Union**. After the Geneva Meeting Briand quite openly proclaimed the aims of the French bourgeoisie: Prevention of the realisation of the Five-Year Plan and the opening of the Soviet market for capitalism.

Social democracy is of course doing its share in creating a war atmosphere: its noisy disarmament campaigns have no other aim than to cloak over the preparations for an attack upon the Soviet Union and to divert the workers from the real fight against war. In face of the tremendous

activity of the warmongers we must declare that our Party has to record several setbacks since the brilliant campaign which it conducted for 1st August 1929. The C.C. therefore laid down the **practical measures** in order to raise our fight "against the stream" onto a **higher level**. These are, for instance, the orientation of the trade union organisations to a systematic recruiting of members in the factories producing war material, in the ports etc.; boycott of the production of war material; resumption of the anti-militarist activity of the trade unions, which was a very important and positive feature of the labour movement before the war; persistent and broad organisation of the recruits and reservists; improved connection with the sailors and soldiers; systematic fight against military training of the youth in the schools and sport clubs etc. All these measures are to be accompanied by a broad-scale enlightenment campaign on our Leninist attitude to war.

The C.C. finally adopted measures for securing the success of the International Fighting Day against Unemployment on 25th February.

The overwhelming majority of the C.C. is of the opinion that in France we are on the eve of great struggles of the working class as a result of the rapidly maturing crisis, that French imperialism is making tremendous efforts to accelerate the formation of a united front of the capitalist countries for the annihilation of the "Russian danger". But there are still responsible comrades who question this perspective, and it is obvious that **several comrades of the Central Committee**, such as Vassart, who submitted inadmissible proposals, or others who kept silent all the time, **are infected with opportunism and wish to retreat in face of the difficulties of the struggle in a critical period**. The C.C. will have to continue the discussion of all these questions in order to bring about a clear differentiation and to clear up the questions which are still obscure.

UNION OF SOVIET REPUBLICS

Moscow Soviet Elections Ended.

Moscow, 8th February 1931.

The elections for the Moscow and district soviets have now ended. According to provisional figures 2,542 members and substitute members have been elected. 62% of the elected workers are members or candidates of the Communist Party, 33% are non-party, 5% are members of the Young Communist League. 604 women have been elected. 1,250 are members of the shock groups. 358 are clerical employees, etc., including a number of engineers and doctors.

The total poll was 94.1% as compared with 70% in 1929 and 37% in 1927. The organised workers took part in the elections to the extent of 97.1%, as compared with 86.5% at the last elections. 81.6% of the unorganised population took part in the elections as compared with 60% at the last election.

The following features of the activity of the masses are particularly interesting: in the year 1927 10,000 amendments to the directives were submitted; in the year 1929 this number increased to 50,000 and in 1931 to 220,000. A comparison of the election results of the different periods shows that considerable progress has been achieved in regard to the development of proletarian democracy, the socialist competition between the districts, industrial undertakings and factory departments. During the election campaign 8,000 shock groups with a total of 170,000 members were organised.

During the elections the leading role of the working class has been raised to a higher level and its influence upon the other sections of the toilers has increased. 30,000 workers took part in the campaign preparations. Factories and workshops took over whole blocks of houses in the neighbourhood and the workers canvassed the houses. Special measures were taken to carry the campaign into all the villages. During the campaign no less than 34,000 workers applied for membership of the Communist Party, and 24,600 young workers joined the Young Communist League. 8,000,000 roubles were invested in the Five-Year Plan in Four Years loan.